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Baptist
Confession of Faith,
1651.

THE
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OF
THE
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Baptist churches, England.

THE

FAITH AND PRACTISE,

OF

THIRTY CONGREGATIONS

GATHERED

ACCORDING TO THE PRIMITIVE PATTERN

IN

Rutland, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire,
Leicestershire, Huntingdonshire, Oxfordshire, and
Bedfordshire.

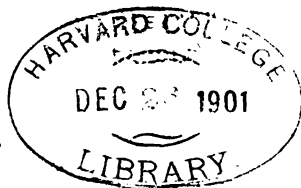
*Published in love, and by consent of Representatives from
each Congregation, 1651.*

NORTHAMPTON :

TAYLOR & SON, THE DRYDEN PRESS,

1901.

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Walker fund.

Introduction.

The following is a verbatim reproduction, line for line, page for page, of the only known copy of the Confession of Faith of Early Baptist Churches, printed in the year 1651. The Confession was, perhaps, issued first by itself, and not until afterwards as an integral part of a curious theological work, entitled :

The Creation and Fall of the First Adam reviewed ; Shewing what he was by Creation, and other Accommodation, and what he lost by Degeneration. Also Nature's Vindication, pleading that it is neither sinfull, vile, nor corrupt : And many Objections answered. With a distinction betwixt the Humane and Divine Nature, Natures inability to spiritual Attainments without the free gift of God ; and the excellent use of Natures Vindication, in point of Prayer, Preaching, Magistracy, Warr. By Capt. Robert Everard Whereunto is annexed the Faith and Order of thirty Congregations by joynt consent.

This work was printed in 1652, the Confession was printed in 1651. The only copy yet discovered is bound at the end of Captain Everard's book, with separate pagination as in this reprint.

The reproduction of " The Faith and Practise " was executed under the personal supervision of the late Mr. John Taylor, of Northampton, who obtained for the purpose

the courteous loan of the original tract from Chilwell College Library, Nottingham. The reprint was made more than twenty years ago with the scrupulous carefulness and invariable accuracy which marked all Mr. Taylor's historical publications. He bestowed, if possible, additional care upon this tract, for it was the aspiration of his life to issue an ambitious historical work on Confessions of Faith. This early local confession was to be the chief of an exhaustive collection of Confessions of Faith from all parts of the world, and was to be the basis for biographies of the signatories, and histories of the churches they represented. In pursuit of these objects, Mr. Taylor, disregarding expense and trouble, ransacked public and private libraries in both hemispheres. The mass of information collected during a period approaching forty years is so great, that though nearly one hundred pages are in type, it is to be feared that no one will be found with the ability and leisure to prepare the remainder for publication. It has, therefore, been decided to issue "The Faith and Practise" without addition, in the hope that at some time in the future a worthy student of Nonconformist history will arise to complete the work so conscientiously begun.

The
FAITH
AND
PRACTISE
Of Thirty
Congregations,
Gathered according to the
Primitive Pattern.

Published (in love) by consent of two from
each Congregation, appointed for that purpose.

1. To inform those who have a desire to know what Religious Duties they hold forth.
2. To undeceive those that are mis-informed thereof.
3. To the end the said Congregations may in love, and the spirit of Meekness, be informed by any that conceive they walk aright.

Rom. 12. 18. *If it be possible, as much as in you is, have Peace with all men.*

London, Printed by J. M. for Will. Larnar,
at the Blackmore near Fleet-bridge, 1651.



To all the Saints and Churches of God,
who walk according to the commands
of Jesus Christ, in *England, Wales,*
Army, or else-where.

DEarly Beloved, and Fellow Citizens
of the household of God, Grace,
Mercy, and Peace be multiplied
unto you from God, through Jesus
Christ; The Lord preserve your
minds and hearts by his holy Spirit, with all
those gifts of his Free Grace which he hath
bestowed upon you, to adorn the doctrine of
the Gospel in every thing whereunto ye are
called, to live to the glory and praise of his
Grace.

Loving Brethren, if we could have con-
veniently conveyed this Copie unto your
hands before it went to the Press, doubtless
we might have gained your Christian Ad-
vice and Assistance herein, which might
have been very Beneficial to the Truth,
wherein you are with us alike concerned and
engaged; but by reason of the distance of

A 2

place,

To the Reader.

place, and also being unacquainted, hath hindered our sending; but we hope our forwardness herein will not be any hinderance to you for the future, to manifest your concurrence with us, so far as we own the Truth; for the preserving our Union with God, and our Joy and Peace with each other, but the rather to give you occasion to make use of the Ability and Power God hath betruſted you with, for our Informations in what you judge is wanting, and for our further Confirmation and Encouragement in those things you approve of with us, have we published this ensuing Treatise; that so we may agree with love in peace and truth, by the Assistance of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. So with our Prayers, we subscribe our selves

Your Servants in the Lord.

The



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The



The Faith and Practise of thirty Congregations.

E Z E K. 43. 11.

And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the laws thereof; and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.

M A T T H. 5. 16.

Let your light so shine before men, &c.

H E B R. 3. 6.

But Christ as a Son, over his own &c.

1. hat that God whom we acknowledge, ought to be worshipped by all, and above all that are called Gods, and he is Infinite in power and wisdom, universal, invisable, eternal. *Pf.* 96.
3. 4. *Ier.* 23. 24. *Col.* 1. 17. *Rom.* 1. 20.

That

2. That God created all creatures visible and invisible, by his own wisdom and power, *Col. 1. 16.* For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth visible and invisible &c. *Ier. 10. 12.* He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.

3. That God preserveth all creatures which are in being. *Nehemiah. 9. 6.* Thou, even thou art Lord alone, thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth and all the things that are therein, the Seas, and all that is therein, and thou preserveth them all &c. *Rom. 11. 36.*

4. That the creation doth plainly declare the Power and Righteousness of God; *Rom. 1. 20.* For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, &c. *Isa. 40. 26.*

5. That God commandeth men to take a view of his Wise, Powerful, and Righteous workes of creation. *Isa. 40. 26.*
Lift

Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things ; &c.

6. That God by his good creatures called or calleth men to a serious consideration, or meditation, that they may further understand his Wisdom and Power. *Rom.* 1. 20. For the invisible things of him &c.

7. That God doth command men to speak or declare that which they have learned by the teaching of the creatures ; *Psal.* 145. 5. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy Maiestie, and of thy wondrous works.

8. That the consideration of the Lord's handyworks in creatures, is a means to beget thoughts of God, and of our selves, futable to his greatness, and our inferiority ; *Psal.* 8. 3, 4. When I consider thy heavens ; the work of thy fingers, &c. What is man, that thou art mindful of him ? &c.

9. That whatsoever good Meditations, or serious Considerations we have of the glorious works of Creation, ought to break forth with admiration unto thankfulness to God, *Psal.* 136. *from ver. 3. to ver. 9.* Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good, &c.

10. That those which did refuse to worship
ship

ship or glorifie God answerably to the teaching of the Creation, the Lord gave them over, or forsook them so far, that they became so desperately wicked, that they did things contrary to nature, *Rom. 1. 26, 27.* For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use, into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust, &c.

11. God created . or made *Adam* a living soul, and in his own Likeness in Sovereignty or Dominion; *Gen. 1. 26.* And God said, let us make man in our Image, after our Likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the Sea, and over the fowl of the Ayr, and over the Cattle, and over all the earth &c. and *ver. 27.* So God Created man in his own image, &c.

12. That God gave unto *Adam* Lawes or commands, that he might know his Will; *Gen. 2. 16. 17.* And the Lord God commanded the man saying, of every Tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the Tree of the Knowledge of good and

and evill, thou shalt not eat of it. &c.

13. That God declared unto *Adam* what penalty or punishment he would cause to befall him, if he disobeyed his Will, *Gen. 2. 17.* For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.

14. That *Adam* did sin or disobey the righteous commands of the Lord, *Gen. 3. 6.* And when the woman saw that the Tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant, &c. She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

15. That God told *Adam* very plainly what death it should be that he would cause to come on him, and what sorrows should attend him in the mean while; *Gen. 3. 17.* And unto Adam he said; Because thou hast hearkned unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the Tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it, Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life, &c. and *ver. 19.* In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou returne unto the ground: For out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and to dust &c.

16. That

16. That all mankind are liable to partake of the same death or punishment which the Lord in his righteous judgement caused to fall on *Adam* for his transgression; *Rom.* 5. 18. Therefore as by the offence of one, judgement came upon all men to condemnation, &c.

17. That *Jesus Christ*, through (or by) the grace of God, suffered death for all mankind, or every man; *Heb.* 2. 9. That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

18. That *Christ Jesus*, the second *Adam*, will as certainly raise all mankind from that death which fell on them, through or by the first *Adam's* sin or offence, as surely as they partake of it; *Rom.* 5. 18. Even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

19. That *Jesus Christ*, his Lordly or Kingly preheminance over all mankind, is vindicated or maintained in the Scriptures account, by virtue of his dying or suffering for them; *Rom.* 14. 9. For to this end, *Christ* both dyed, and rose, and revived; that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

20. That

20. That God's Word, Son, or Spirit, are one, 1 *Ioh.* 5. 7. For there are three that beare witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one: God the Father is said to Sanctifie; and the Son is said to Sanctifie, also the holy Ghost is said to Sanctifie; So they are one; *Jude* 1. To them that are Sanctified by God the Father. *Heb.* 10. 29. Who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was Sanctified, an unholy thing; &c. *Rom.* 15. 16. Being Sanctified by the holy Ghost.

God and his Word are one; *Ioh.* 1. 1. And the Word was God. The Word quickneth, *Psal.* 119. 50. Thy word hath quickened me. The Son quickeneth, *Eph.* 2. 1. You hath he quickened. &c. And the spirit quickneth *Ioh.* 6. 63. It is the Spirit that quickneth. So they are one. God giveth Gifts, and the Son doth the same, also the holy Ghost, So they are one. *Iam.* 1. 71. Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, &c. *Eph.* 4. 10, 11. He that descended is the same also that ascended

ascended, &c. And he gave some Apostles and some Prophets, &c. *Acts.* 2. 38 And ye shall receive the gift of the holy Ghost. God's Word, and Power, and the holy Ghost go together, doing one and the same work. 1. *Thef.* 1. 5. For our Gospel came not unto you in Word onely, but also in power, and in the holy Ghost. &c. There is none goes to the Father, without the Son, neither to the Son without the Father, nor to either of them both, without the Spirit; *Ioh.* 6. 44. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. *Jo.* 14. 6. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. *Eph.* 1. 18. For through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father. 1 *Cor.* 12. 3. He that receiveth the Son, receiveth the Father, and the Spirit also; *Math.* 10. 40. He that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me: *Gal.* 3. 2. Received ye the Spirit by the workes of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?

21. That the Lord of all mankind, *Jesus Christ*, hath the power of giving Lawes for the governing or ruling every man in the World in spiritual worship, *Isa.* 9. 6, 7. For unto us is a Child born,
unto

unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his shoulder, *Math.* 28. 18. 19, 20.

22. That this Prince of Peace, *Jefus Christ*, is the only or principal high Priest, which offered up sacrifice, or made reconciliation for the Sins of the people, *Heb.* 2. 17. That he might be a merciful and faithful high Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the Sins of the people.

23. That the high Priest *Jefus Christ*, is not onely King or Governour, but also the Apostle or Prophet of the Truth professed, or the true profession of Saints *Heb.* 3. 1. Consider the Apostle and high Priest of our profession, Christ *Jefus*.

24. That all the riches appertaining to a spiritual and eternal life, were treasured up in *Jefus Christ*. *Col.* 2. 3. In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

25. That there is not, neither ever was any man endued with any abilities and power to do the revealed will of God, but it was given him from above, *Iam.* 1. 17. Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above &c. B 26. That

26. That the gifts of God spring from the pleasure of his will, or of his free grace; even the Lord *Iesus Christ* sprung from thence, from whom commeth all spiritual mercies: *Rom.* 8. 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all: how shall he not with him also freely give us all things, *Heb.* 2. 9.

27. That *Iesus Christ* was faithfull in all things whereunto he was appointed, *Heb.* 3. 1, 2. Consider the Apostle and high priest of our profession Christ Iesus, who was faithfull to him that appointed him, &c.

28. That *Iesus Christ* was not only the Lawmaker, but the Law giver to every man that liveth in the world, in that he giveth every man therein some measure of light. *Jo.* 1. 9. That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

29. That God of his free love giveth severall gifts unto men, dividing severally as it pleaseth him, by one and the same spirit; *1 Cor.* 12. 11. But all these worketh that one and the selfe same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will, *Eph.* 4. 7.

30 That

30. That the gifts of God given unto men of his own free grace, though never so richly they be furnished both with abilities and power, yet those gifts of grace do not demonstrate, or declare them to be faithfull servants; but it doth very plainly prove, that they are called upon thereby to be faithfull Servants; 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. 2. Let a man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, &c. Moreover it is required in Stewards, that a man be found faithful.

31. That those gifts which God of his free grace gives unto men to the enabling or inpowering them to obey or believe in his name, are called the grace of God, as they spring from the spirit of grace; *Acts.* 18. 17. Who when he was come, helped them much, which had believed through grace.

32. That when God of his own bountifulness hath given gifts unto men to be improved by them to the praise of his grace, as to believe or obey, then those so endued are Stewards of the grace of God, 1 *Pet.* 4. 10. As every man hath received the gift, even so Minister one unto another, as good Stewards of the manifold grace of God.

33. That God requireth or commandeth service of men, answerable to those gifts of grace which he of his good pleasure hath bestowed upon them, *Colos.* 2. 6. As ye have therefore received Christ Iesus the Lord, so walke ye in him. *Ioh.* 12. 37.

34. That it is the gracious pleasure of God, that *Iesus Christ* his life, death, and resurrection, should be made known unto men, and by men, as arguments, or motives, to allure or provoke them to live holy and righteous in this present world; *Eph.* 5. 1. 2. Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and walke in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us, &c. *Rom.* 6. 4, to ver. 14.

35. That God requireth that man should worship him in Spirit and truth, or with all the heart, before they outwardly make a profession of him: *Acts.* 8. 36. 37. And the Eunuch said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest &c.

36. That all actions performed by man towards God, ought to flow from a principle of Love; *1. Cor.* 13. 1, 2, 3. Though I speak with the tongues of men and Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding brass, &c.

37. That

37 That God loves man first, and declareth, or maketh known his love to men, before any man can Act from a principle of love in obedience to him, *Jo.* 15. 16. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you; &c.

38. That whosoever obeyeth God with those gifts of his free grace, (as abilities and power to do his will) never so faithfully, Evangelically, or Unfainedly, giving him the glory of those performances; yet thus believing or obeying doth not procure salvation as eternal life, neither are they any cause at all to move God to bestow it; *Ezek.* 16. from *ver.* 3. to *ver.* 10. Thus saith the Lord unto Jerufalem; thy birth and thy Nativity is of the Land of Canaan, &c. I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; &c. *Eph.* 2. 9. Not of works, lest any man should boast; *Rom.* 4. 2. *Jo.* 15. 15.

39. That the ground or principal end of mens believing or obeying God, ought to be for the advancing of the glory of God, or for the Praise of his free grace; *1. Cor.* 6. 19, 20, What? know not ye that your bodie is the temple of the holy Ghost

which ye have of God? And ye are not your own; For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorifie God; &c.

40. That those which serve or fear the Lord, honouring or glorifying him with his gifts bestowed on them, to the praise of his free grace, do demonstratively or openly manifest themselves to be his faithfull servants, or children, 1. *Jo.* 3. 10. In this the Children of God are manifest; &c. *Acts.* 10. 35.

41. That those which serve the Lord with integrity of mind and spirit, improving their abilities and power given unto them of God, to his glory and praise, are not only called faithful Servants, or the children of the living God, but they have the promises of God to be intrusted with more of the manifestations of himself, which is called the misterie which hath bin hid from many ages, and generations, which the disobedient shall not injoy. *Cor.* 1. 26. 27. Even the mystery which hath bin hid from ages, &c. But now is made manifest to his Saints, to whom God would make known what is the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

42 That

42. That those which love the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to walke in his appointed ways with that strength of ability and power which God of his own mercy hath given unto them, they shall have peace of conscience, being freed from anguish of spirit, having their hearts comforted by the holy Ghost ; *Rom.* 2. 10. But glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, &c.

43. That all those that continue steadfastly unto the end of their lives, pressing forward to the mark. (Jesus Christ) that is set before them, shall not only have the comfort and joy which is a part of their portion in this life, but they shall also have a Crown of eternal glory in the life to come; *Rev.* 22. 14. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in thorow the gates into the City. 2. *Tim.* 4. 8.

44. That God of his free grace or love, called or calleth sinners to repentance, and afforded or affordeth them time or opportunity to repent or returne unto him ; *Rom.* 4. 2. Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness &c, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance ?

B 4

45 That

45. That all those who refuse to improve the gifts of grace which God hath afforded them, so that they repent not, neither turne to him in obedience to his commands made manifest unto them, they do despise the goodness of God or his free grace, denying the Lord that bought them, and so are liable to destruction, *1. Pet. 2. 1, 2.* But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, &c.

46. That whosoever shall preach, teach, or practise any doctrine in the worship of God, pretending it in the name of Jesus Christ, which is not to be heard or read of in the record of God, which was given by inspiration of the holy Ghost; such teachers are lyable to the curse of God, howsoever, countenanced by men, *Gal. 1. 8, 9.* But though we, or an Angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you then that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

47. That the Baptisme which the Lord
Jesus

Jesus commanded his disciples to teach, ought to be known by every one, before they submit themselves, or obey it; *Asts.* 2. 38. 41. Repent and be baptised every one of you; &c. Then they that gladly received this word, were baptised, &c.

48. That the way and manner of baptising, both before the death of Christ, and since his resurrection and ascension, was to go into the water, and to be baptised; *Math.* 3. 6. And were baptised of him in Jordan, &c. *Math.* 1. 5. and 8. 9.

49. That when Baptisme is made known, or any other Action of obedience, then for men to refuse it, they are said to reject the counsel of God against themselves; *Luk.* 7. 30. But the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptised of him.

50. That those which received the word of God preached by the Ministrie of the Gospel, and were Baptized according to the Counsel of God, at the same time or day they were of the visible Church of God, *Acts.* 2. 41. And the same day there were added unto the church about three thousand souls.

51. That

51. That the only foundation of the Church of God, is the Doctrines of the Apostles or Prophets, as they spring from Jesus Christ the chiefe corner stone, whereon this or any other people are to be built together as the house of God; *Eph.* 2. 20, 21. And are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone, &c.

52. That the chief or only ends of a people baptised according to the counsel of God, when they meet together as the congregation or fellowship of Christ, are, or ought to be, for to walk suitably; or to give up themselves unto a holy conformity to all the Laws or Ordinances of Jesus Christ, answerable to the gifts and graces received, improving them for the glory of God, and the edification of each other in love, *Eph.* 4. 15, 16. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joyned together, &c. maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of it self in love.

53. That Jesus Christ took Bread, and the juice of the Vine, and brake, and gave to

to his Disciples, to eat and drink with thanksgiving; which practise is left upon record as a memorial of his suffering, to continue in the Church untill he come again; 1. *Cor.* 11. 23, 24, 25, 26. The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, &c. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lords death till he come.

54. That the Church ought to call upon God, seeking him by prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, and to be thankful to him for mercies received, sounding forth his praises with understanding. *Eph.* 6. 16, 17, 18. Praying alwayes with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance, and supplication for all Saints.

55. That if any one of the fellowship neglect the watching over his own heart, and so break out into an evill life and conversation, and all good meanes that God hath appointed hath been used towards
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such a one, and that person hath not performed, then ought not such a one to break bread with obedient walkers, to shew forth the death of Christ, seeing he doth deny him in life and conversation; *1 Cor. 5. 12.* If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an Idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one, no, not to eate.

56. That the people of God ought to have a tender respect towards them, as long as there is any hope of being instrumental in the use of that means which God hath appointed for the recovering them out of the snare of sin or wickedness, *2 Thes. 3. 14, 15.* And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, & have no company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

57. That there be contributions made for the relief of those that cannot help themselves with food and rayment, that are willing to the utmost to put forth their strength and skill in some lawful Way or Calling, especially those that are of the household of Faith; such as through sickness or weakness of body cannot labour. *Gal. 6. 9. 10.*

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As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men especially unto them, who are of the household of faith.

58. That it is the good pleasure of God, which hath given gifts of his grace to the Saints or Church of God, that some of the gifted men should be appointed or set apart to attend upon the preaching of the word, for the further edifying of the Churches, that they may be enabled to stand against all oppositions according as necessity requires, to the glory of God and their comfort. *Eph.* 4. 11, 21. And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors, and Teachers; For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

59. That it is the will of God that those Saints or members of the fellowship which are appointed so to spend their labours in teaching or exhorting them in the knowledge of God to their edification and consolation, ought to have maintenance of those that receive spiritual food by them. *1 Cor.* 9. 11. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? 60 That

60. That the maintenance of the Ministers which labour in the Word of God, ought to be the free and Charitable Benevolence, or the chearful contribution of those that acknowledge themselves members of the same fellowship; *2 Cor. 9. 13.* Whiles by the experiment of this ministration, they glorifie God for your professed Subjection unto the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men.

61. That the servants of God, or the Ministers of the Gospel, ought to be content with necessary food and rayment, and to labour with their hands, that they may not be overchargeable, *1 Cor. 4. 12.* because they are to teach that doctrine to every member. *Heb. 13. 5.* Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as you have, &c.

62. That those servants of God which labour in the word much, and well, ought to be had in very good estimation; *1 Tim. 5. 17.* Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

63. That the Church of Jesus Christ ought

ought not to think of any man above what is meet, lest that they give that honour to man, which properly and alone belongeth to God; *Psal.* 115. 1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory; &c. *2 Cor.* 12. 6,

64. That the Church hath directions of God to set apart some men that are suitably qualified, to oversee, or order the affairs concerning the poor distressed members of Christ, that they may not be neglected, and so perish for want of food and rayment, and to take off that work from lying too heavy upon the care of those which labour in the word and doctrine; *Acts.* 6. 3, 4. Wherefore brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the holy Ghost, and Wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give our selves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

65. That if the poor fearing God, cannot conveniently have a competent maintenance, for the supply of their necessities in that society whereunto they must commonly resort, that then those men that have the care laid upon them, send or give intelligence

telligence to the other Churches or saints of God, who have engaged themselves by declaring their willingness towards the relief of such a distressed people, *Rom.* 15. 26. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia, and Achaia, to make a certain contribution for the poor Saints which are at Jerusalem.

66. That those men which the Church of God are to make such uses of as the setting them to minister unto the saints in things spiritual or temporall, it is required that the Church judge those men sound in the faith, that their lives and conversations be unblameable, that those which are without, cannot have any just occasion to speak reproachfully of them, that they be not covetous of filthy lucre, neither selfwilled, but loving and patient towards all men, apt to teach, and to do good works answerable to their abilities. *Titus* 1. 7, 8. 9. For a Bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God, not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate &c. *Acts* 6. 3.

67. That some men amongst the brotherhood

hood who are able to judge in causes of difference that may arise betwixt them in the Church, may be approved or appointed to put an end thereto without partiality, that there may be no unnecessary strivings in the Law to vex one another; *1 Cor.* 6. 5, 6, 7. I speak to your shame; is it so that there is not a wise man amongst you; no, not one, that shall be able to judge between his brethren, &c.

68. That whosoever of the Society or Church of God which shall wilfully or carelessly neglect any lawful way or calling, and so fall into hunger and nakedness, ought to be exhorted with love and meekness, to labour with their abilities in some honest way or calling for their relief which being done orderly, and he or they will not reform, so that futable exhortations take no place, such an one shall be excluded or excommunicated, as one that hath denied the faith; *1 Tim.* 5. 8. But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse then an Infidel.

69. That the offended ought to proceed according to rule, not delaying or prolonging
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time, but out of a tender care, that their hearts may not be hardned by a custome in sin, that thereby the reclaiming of them from sin may be done with the les difficulty; *Mat.* 18. 15, 16, 17. Moreover, if thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother: But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, &c.

70. That if any controversie should so fall out, that the case cannot easily be determined by that society or church where it is first presented, that then use be made of some other society which they are in fellowship with, for their assistance therein; *Acts* 16. 1, 2. And certain men which came down from Judea, taught the Brethren, and said; Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissention and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Elders, about this question.

71. That there be an orderly improving those

those gifts that God of his free grace hath bestowed on the Saints, that one may not hinder another, but as occasion serveth, one by one, speaking the things that they have learned of God, that the hearers may be profited, and so put in a capacity to judge of things concerning the glory of God, and their own peace; 1 *Cor.* 14. 30, 31. If any thing be revealed to another that fitteth by, let the first hold his peace; for ye may all prophesie one by one, that all may learn, &c.

72. That if any one which hath been of the fellowship of Christ, and hath so far subjected himself to temptations that he denyeth to live righteously, or in the fear and love of God and makes shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience, for which he hath been excommunicated according to Order, that it be recorded, and made known to other the Churches, for prevention of evils in them; 1 *Tim.* 1. 19, 20. Holding faith and a good Conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwrack, &c. Of whom is Hymneus and Alexander; &c.

73. That Fasting and Prayer ought to be used, and the laying on of hands, for the

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Ordaining of servants or Officers to attend about the service of God; *Acts* 13. 3. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

74. That we ought to behave our selves towards all men, no otherwise then we would freely or cheerfully they in the like case (if it should fall out) should do toward us, and that we ought to seek a peaceable life with all men, as far as possibly we can, keeping faith and a good conscience; *Luke* 6. 31. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. *Rom.* 12. 18. If it be possible, as much as lyeth in you, live peaceably with all men. *1 Tim.* 1. 19. Holding faith and a good Conscience.

75. That we ought to clear our selves, not only from evil Thoughts harbouring in our hearts, or the evils in life and conversation; but as far as we can, vindicate our selves from all those scandalous aspersions that daylie fall about our ears, setting our good names on fire, to the dishonour of God, whereof many are the Instruments by their wilful contrivances, or by the mis-informations of others, which father upon us such principles

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principles and practises as we abhor,
through ignorant mistakes cunningly sug-
gested by some evil willers at least; 2 Cor.
2. 17. For we are not as many, which cor-
rupt the Word of God: but as of sincerity,
but as of God, in the fight of God speak we
in Christ.



Postscript.





Postscript.

THat we do own a Magistratical power for the governing of this our English Nation, to be determined in a just Parliamentary way; and that we ought to pray for good Governors, and good Government; that we may live a peaceable and godly life in all honesty; standing ready at all times, as necessity may require, to vindicate such a Magistracy or Magistrates, not only with arguments of sound reason, but also with our Estates and Lives; that Righteousness may reign, and Vice may be overthrown, without respect of persons.

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